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### Sister of Mercy Honored at Community-Wide Dinner, January 30, 1967

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**FOR RELEASE**

**IMMEDIATELY**

**SISTER OF MERCY HONORED  
AT COMMUNITY-WIDE DINNER**

Sister Mary Christopher, R.S.M., head of the Sociology Department at Salve Regina College, Newport, Rhode Island, was presented the award of "Woman of the Year" by the Women's Division of the Newport County Chamber of Commerce, Sunday evening, January 29, 1967, at a dinner in her honor at the Viking Hotel, Newport.

The scroll presented to Sister Mary Christopher highlighted her community service to Newport County. This year marks Sister's second year as president of New Visions for Newport County, chief executive of the county's official community action agency responsible for constructing antipoverty programs. She was also one of the leaders, and still is a consultant, for Operation Head Start.

She has been actively interested in the work of many of the community's social service organizations, including the Family Service Association, the Childrens Home, Red Cross, Newport Council of Community Services, Conference on Intergroup Relations, and the like.

Although several other Sisters of Mercy are working in segments of various antipoverty and other social service programs in Rhode Island and Southeastern Massachusetts, Sister Mary Christopher is the only Catholic religious directing a community-wide antipoverty program.

M O R E

She has frequently said in speeches and interviews: "We live not in a world of things but in a world of people. We must renew our society on every level to make it possible for the deprived to live comfortable, healthy, and reasonably happy lives in their own style.

"The aim of any antipoverty program should be to make people self-sufficient. Federal money should be seed-money--an initial investment to help people help themselves."

Sister Mary Christopher, as Mary Frances O'Rourke, received her A. B. degree from Pembroke College of Brown University in 1940. From 1940-1942 she was social worker in the public assistance office in Woonsocket, Rhode Island.

Becoming a Sister of Mercy of the Province of Providence, her first assignment in religious life was as a social worker at St. Aloysius Home in Greenville, Rhode Island. Sister came to Salve Regina College in its opening year, 1947.

In 1955 she secured her M. A. degree from Notre Dame University in Sociology; and in 1962, from the same institution, received her Ph. D.

Sister Mary Christopher is a member of many professional organizations, including the American Catholic Sociological Association, American Sociological Association, Urban League, Rhode Island Association for Mentally Retarded, Council of Social Work Education, etc.

A dozen representatives of various organizations and institutions with which Sister is affiliated each paid tribute to her for her multiple contributions to the community and to Salve Regina College. Those so speaking included Sister Mary Emily, R.S.M., president of the College. Sister Mary Christopher also received many floral tributes and telegrams at the dinner.

# # # #

January 30, 1967